



Natural Resources Conservation Service
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CORRECTED COPY

November 29, 2006

PENNSYLVANIA BULLETIN NO. PA440-7-3

**SUBJECT: LTP – Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) FY 2007 Ranking Form,
Enrollment Process, and Cost-Share Procedures**

**Purpose: To Inform Field Offices of new procedures related to the implementation of
WRP in FY 2007**

Expiration Date: September 30, 2007

Background: Changes in National Office policy and priorities necessitate that Pennsylvania NRCS make minor modifications to WRP procedures. These changes include:

- Performance Goals related to time taken to close on an easement transaction and time taken to restore enrolled acreage
- Increased scrutiny given the quality of restoration efforts
- New valuation methodologies and requirements for retirement of crop base
- Removal of unnecessary inconsistency between programs regarding practice cost lists
- Implementation of “All Appropriate Inquiries” to help NRCS avail itself of various protections from environmental liability under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA)

The National Office is currently revising the WRP Part of the Conservation Programs Manual, and thus several policies are in transition. Therefore, PA NRCS is issuing this bulletin until the revised WRP Part is issued and a PA Supplement can be developed.

Directions: Follow procedures in Exhibit 1 and utilize the forms contained within this Bulletin for the processing of WRP applications. To be considered in the initial round of funding, applications must be received in the NRCS local field office by December 1, 2006. Applications should be received by February 2, 2007, to be considered for the second round of ranking.

Compensation for a WRP permanent easement will be based on the least of the following three values: a) the appraised market value as determined through the Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisitions, also known as a “Yellow Book Appraisal”; the geographic area rate; or the landowner offer. For FY 2007, the geographic area rate for Pennsylvania will be \$2500/acre. Compensation for a 30-year easement will be 75% of the amount NRCS would pay for a permanent easement.

--more--

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The Certificate of Use and Consent, the Hazardous Waste Checklist, and the Warranty Easement Deed forms are currently being revised by the National Office. Therefore, please contact Martha Joseph, Easement Program Manager, at (814) 796-6760, ext 114, for the most recent versions of these forms

NRCS-PA previously used a restoration cap of \$750 per acre for restoration agreements (no easement). This cap has been lifted. Restoration costs will be estimated using standard practice component lists as used in other NRCS farm bill conservation programs. For permanent easements, NRCS will reimburse up to 100% of the cost of restoration, an amount not to exceed \$2000 per acre. For 30-year easements and non-easement restoration agreement, NRCS will reimburse up to 75% of the cost of restoration, an amount not to exceed \$1500 per acre. Upon prior written approval, the Assistant State Conservationist for Programs may authorize reimbursement in excess of these amounts on a case-by-case basis where specific wetland restoration benefits justify the increased cost share expenditure.

Contact Martha Joseph at (814) 796-6760, ext 114 or martha.joseph@pa.usda.gov or Barry Frantz at (717) 237-2216 or barry.frantz@pa.usda.gov.

/s/

CRAIG A. DERICKSON
State Conservationist

Enclosures (4)

- Exhibit 1 Steps in WRP Process
- Exhibit 2 Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) Eligibility, Preliminary Planning, and Cost Estimates Worksheet
- Exhibit 3 WRP Easement Ranking Form
- Exhibit 4 WRP Non-Easement Ranking Form

THE STEPS IN THE WRP PROCESS

The following document outlines the general steps needed to implement WRP from application to completion of restoration. Some deviations may occur depending upon circumstances of a particular project. This document does not identify all details associated with each step, but is provided as a guide. Please contact Easement Program Manager with any questions or requests for variance from the process outlined herein.

1. Landowner indicates interest in WRP and completes AD-1153 application form.
2. NRCS Representatives (presumably the District Conservationist* or other field office representative) meets on site with landowner to determine eligibility, preliminary restoration plan and estimated costs, and ranking form. * The District Conservationist is identified throughout this document, but can mean the District Conservationist or someone authorized to act on behalf of the District Conservationist.
3. The District Conservationist forwards to the Easement Program Manager the "Application Package" consisting of required forms, maps, and copy of the landowner's deed. The Easement Program Manager works with the District Conservationist to obtain missing information.
4. The Easement Program Manager reviews application packages with State Biologist and Fish and Wildlife Service representative and develops Ranking List.
5. The Easement Program Manager forwards to Assistant State Conservationist for Programs pending availability of funding.
6. Once funding decision is made based upon ranking and availability of funding, the Easement Program Manager notifies District Conservationist of project selection and requests from Contracting Office a contract number for those approved and funded.
7. The Easement Program Manager sends to the applicant a Tentative Acceptance Letter with Request for Notification of Intent to Continue. Easement Program Manager notifies the District Conservationist, Contracting Officer, and the Budget Officer regarding Landowner response to Notification of Intent to Continue, including whether Landowner will retire or relocate any crop base associated with the proposed easement area.

If the Landowner responds No to the Intent to Continue or fails to respond within the time specified in the Tentative Acceptance Letter, then the Application is terminated.

If Landowner responds "Yes" to Intent to Continue and the application is for a restoration only agreement, then proceed to Step 24. If Landowner responds "Yes" to Intent to Continue and the application is for easement enrollment, then:

8. The District Conservationist meets with the Landowner to flag WRP boundary including GPS corners. Access route to site is also marked. A map of the proposed easement boundary is generated out of Toolkit and forwarded to the Easement Program Manager. Note: If acreage changes significantly from that originally offered, a new ranking sheet must be completed at this point to determine if ranking is high enough to continue and offer funding.
9. The Easement Program Manager reviews easement boundary and requests Contracting Officer to order title commitment and appraisal services.
10. Upon receipt and review of appraisal, Easement Program Manager sends an Option to Purchase Agreement to Landowner. The Easement Program Manager will request direct deposit information, assignment of payment forms, and other appropriate vendor information from the Landowner.

11. Landowner signs and returns Option Agreement to Purchase to Easement Program Manager within 15 days of receipt. Easement Program Manager notifies District Conservationist, Contracting Officer, and Budget Officer about project obligation.
12. The Contracting Officer works with District Conservationist to order survey.
13. The Contracting Officer and Easement Program Manager review title commitment for restrictive encumbrances and notify Landowner to resolve outstanding issues.
14. The District Conservationist completes forms necessary for easement closing, including the Preliminary Certificate of Inspection and Possession and the Hazardous Waste Checklist, and forwards forms to the Easement Program Manager. Please contact the Easement Program Manager for the most recent versions of the Certificate of Inspection and Possession and Hazardous Waste Checklist. At this time, the District Conservationist should also schedule a site feasibility visit with appropriate technical specialists (such as program partner, biologist, and engineer/technician).
15. Upon receipt of survey, closing forms from District Conservationist, and documents needed to address restrictive encumbrances, the Easement Program Manager requests the Office of the General Counsel (OGC) to issue a Preliminary Title Opinion (PTO) authorizing NRCS to proceed to closing.
16. Upon receipt of the PTO from OGC, the Contracting Officer works with a closing agent to schedule the easement closing. The closing agent has the Landowner execute the Warranty Easement Deed and ensures that all closing instructions are met.
17. The closing agent sends copy of recorded deed and final title policy to the Contracting Officer with invoice for closing fees. The Contracting Officer forwards documents to the Easement Program Manager and notifies the District Conservationist that the easement has been recorded.
18. The Easement Program Manager enters easement acres into PRS, and the District Conservationist completes the Final Certificate of Inspection and Possession (on or after date easement is recorded) and sends to Easement Program Manager. At this time, the District Conservationist can develop final restoration plan for site. The District Conservationist enters the appropriate planning progress information into PRS. NOTE: The Landowner is not required to sign final restoration plan.
19. Easement Program Manager sends final title package to OGC and requests OGC final title opinion. Easement Program Manager closes acquisition file upon receipt of OGC final title opinion.
20. The District Conservationist, Easement Program Manager, and Contracting Officer discuss and determine best contracting method for obtaining necessary restoration.
21. If Long-Term Contracting (LTC) procedures are to be followed, then District Conservationist shall develop LTC with landowner utilizing the practice cost list for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). However, WRP will compensate the landowner for the actual cost not to exceed a maximum for restoring the easement area. If the bids obtained by the Landowner for the restoration exceed the EQIP cost rates, then the District Conservationist shall request a modification from the Easement Program Manager.
22. The District Conservationist works with the Landowner and the Financial Management Section to ensure that appropriate vendor information, assignment of payment forms, direct deposit forms, etc. for the restoration stage of the process are complete.
23. Upon restoration completion, the District Conservationist certifies that the practices meet NRCS standards and specifications and notifies the Easement Program Manager that restoration work is complete. The District Conservationist enters progress in PRS. Invoices for work can be forwarded to the State Office Financial Management Section for payment.

RESTORATION-ONLY AGREEMENTS

24. The District Conservationist schedules a site feasibility visit with the landowner and appropriate technical specialists (such as program partner, biologist, and engineer/technician) and develops final restoration plan for site. NOTE: The Landowner must sign final restoration plan.
25. The District Conservationist, Easement Program Manager, and Contracting Officer discuss and determine best contracting method for obtaining necessary restoration.
26. If Long-Term Contracting (LTC) procedures are to be followed, then District Conservationist shall develop LTC with landowner utilizing the practice cost list for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).
27. Upon restoration completion, the District Conservationist certifies that the practices meet NRCS standards and specifications and notifies the Easement Program Manager that restoration work is complete. The District Conservationist enters progress in PRS. Invoices for work can be forwarded to the State Office Financial Management Section for payment.

Pennsylvania NRCS
Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
Eligibility, Preliminary Planning, and Cost Estimates Worksheet

<p>Landowner name: _____ (Primary contact)</p> <p>Landowner SSN: _____</p> <p>Mailing address: _____ _____</p> <p>Phone number: _____</p>	<p>Spouse name: _____ (if married)</p> <p>Spouse SSN: _____</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"><p>WRP Site Location: <i>(this section must be completed)</i></p><p>County: _____</p><p>Township: _____</p><p>Other: _____</p></div>
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I. Landowner Eligibility

- A. Has the land been owned by the applicant for at least 12 months? (if Yes, it is not eligible for easement without State Conservationist waiver)
Yes ☐ No ☐
- B. Are there any co-owners other than the spouse? (If YES, list the names as they appear on the deed.)
Yes ☐ No ☐
- C. Is there a land contract or land rental contract? (if YES, list names and circumstances)
Yes ☐ No ☐
- D. Does the applicant have “legal” access to this parcel? (If NO, parcel is ineligible)
Yes ☐ No ☐
- E. Does the applicant have clear title to the property? (if NO, inform applicant that any mortgages, liens, judgments, past due taxes must be address prior to easement closing)
Yes ☐ No ☐
- F. Does the applicant or any of the co-owners (including spouse) meet payment eligibility criteria (Conservation Compliance, Wetland Conservation, AGI)? (If NO, then applicant must address payment eligibility issue prior to acceptance into the program)
Yes ☐ No ☐
- G. Are there crop base acres located within the proposed easement area? (if Yes, if application funded, applicant will need to make a choice prior to appraisal whether the crop base will be retired or relocated at the time of closing)
Yes ☐ No ☐

II. Land Eligibility

WRP LAND ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION	
ELIGIBLE ACRES IN EASEMENT RESTORED WETLAND ACRES (estimated)	OTHER ADJACENT ACRES ALLOWED Up to 50% of easement unless more needed to square boundaries (estimated)
Existing Riparian _____	Existing Wetland _____ (Non Ag. Land)
Riparian (Restorable) _____	Protected Upland – _____ Non-Cropland
Prior Converted PC _____	Restorable Upland _____ Cropland to Restore
Farmed Wetland FW _____	Non-hydric floodplain _____ soils.
Lands altered by Floods PW _____	Other _____ _____
Wetland farmed under natural _____ conditions W	Justification: _____ _____
Farmed Wetland Pasture FWP _____	_____
Eligible CRP _____	_____
Commenced Conversion CC _____	_____
Degraded Wetlands _____	_____
Restored Wetland with < 30 year _____ easement	_____
TOTAL ELIGIBLE ACRES _____	TOTAL OTHER ALLOWED _____
Non-eligible acres offered by participant at no cost to gov't _____	
TOTAL ACRES IN EASEMENT AREA _____	
This area meets WRP land eligibility requirements _____ District Conservationist	

III. Preliminary Plan and Cost Estimates (Very Rough Estimates Only)

ESSENTIAL RESTORATION PRACTICES							
Structural Restoration Practices							
				NRCS		PARTNERS	
Field	Pract #	Nar. ID	Description	Qty	Est. Cost	Qty	Est. Cost
	657		Wetland Restoration - ditch or tile plug -				
	657		Wetland Restoration – water control structures				
	657		Wetland Restoration - Micro and Macrotopography excavation				
	356		Dike -				
	410		Grade Stab. Str. -				
	620		Underground Outlet -				
	659 or 658		Wetland Enhancement - Micro and Macrotopography excavation or Wetland Creation (Non hydric soils)				
	342		Critical Area Seeding				
Vegetative Cover Establishment							
Field	Pract #	Nar. ID	Description	Qty	Est. Cost	Qty	Est. Cost
	612		Tree Planting -				
	652		Woodland Direct Seeding -				
	657		Wetland Restoration - natural regeneration of trees				

	657		Wetland Restoration - natural regeneration herbaceous veg.				
	327		Conservation Cover - Seeding				

TOTAL ESTIMATED RESTORATION COST _____

RESTORATION COST PER ACRE _____

SUPPLEMENTAL PRACTICES DESIRED (To be designed later)

_____ Additional water control structures

_____ Trails, blinds, nesting structures, etc.

_____ Other _____

LANDOWNER'S OBJECTIVE

IV. OTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS (Include any observations that reviewer believes may impact success of restoration):

V. MAPS

The following maps must be attached to this plan to complete the Preliminary Plan. The easement area boundaries must be delineated clearly on ALL maps.

- 1) Soils Map with the areas presently determined to have hydric soils highlighted.
- 2) Topographic Map with easement area highlighted,
- 3) Aerial Map with easement area highlighted

The Following documentation must accompany this form:

- AD-1153 Application for Long-Term Contract Assistance Through the WRP Program
- Ranking Sheet
- Copy of Deed or Title
- Environmental Evaluation Checklist
- Cultural Resources Review Form
- County Hydric Soils List

**WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)
EASEMENT PROJECTS RANKING FORM
November 2006**

Applicant _____

County _____ Tract No. _____ Easement: Perm _____
30-Year _____

ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

TOTALS

I. Location

A. Proximity to Protected Wildlife Areas

- | | | |
|--|-----------|-------|
| 1. Project is within 1 mile of an existing WRP easement, National Wildlife Refuge, Lands owned by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, or similarly protected wildlife areas | 20 points | _____ |
| 2. Project is within 2 miles of an existing WRP easement, National Wildlife Refuge, Lands owned by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, or similarly protected wildlife areas | 10 points | _____ |

B. Proximity to Riparian Area

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-------|
| 1. Adjoining | 5 points | _____ |
| 2. Less than or equal to 500 feet | 3 points | _____ |

Riparian Easement Multiplier – Use only if the WRP Easement includes the riparian area.

--points _____ x 2 = _____

II. Size of Contiguous Easement

(round to whole acre)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| A. Greater than or equal to 30 acres | 10 points | _____ |
| B. Between 25 and 29 acres | 6 points | _____ |
| C. Between 20 and 24 acres | 4 points | _____ |
| D. Between 10 and 19 acres | 2 points | _____ |

Add 1 point for every acre over 30 acres.

- maximum is 20 additional points ____ points _____

III. Hydrology

A. Hydric Soil Area to be Restored (% of hydric soil acreage that will not have hydrology restored)

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------|-------|
| 1. 80 – 100% | 10 points | _____ |
| 2. 60 – 79% | 6 points | _____ |
| 3. 40 – 59% | 2 points | _____ |

NOTES: Consider only hydric soil within easement
Include any recent wetland restoration,
but no existing natural wetlands.

B. Average Slope for the Restoration Area

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| 1. Less than or equal to 1.5% | 10 points | _____ |
| 2. Between 1.6 and 2.5% | 6 points | _____ |
| 3. Between 2.6 and 3.0% | 2 points | _____ |

NOTE: Projects should not exceed 4%

C. Saturated Soils Above Water Line Elevation

(Surface Area <1 ft. elev. above planned permanent water line, as % of Permanent Pool Area)

- | | | |
|---|-----------|-------|
| 1. Greater than or equal to 200% (2:1) | 10 points | _____ |
| 2. Greater than or equal to 100% (1:1) | 6 points | _____ |
| 3. Greater than or equal to 50% (0.5:1) | 2 points | _____ |

D. Source of Hydrology – Perennial Flow

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| 1. Less than 25% of water from perennial flow | 6 points | _____ |
| 2. Greater than 25% and less than or equal to 50% of water from perennial flow | 4 points | _____ |
| 3. Greater than 50% of water from perennial flow | 2 points | _____ |

Surface Water Multiplier

Less than 10:1 Watershed Area to Pool Area

-- Points _____ x 3 = _____

Greater than or equal to 10:1 Watershed Area to Pool Area

-- Points _____ x 1 = _____

Greater than or equal to 20:1 Watershed Area to Pool Area

-- Points _____ x 0.5 = _____

IV. Buffer Included in Easement

(upland or existing natural wetland)

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| A. Surrounds hydric soil area (95 – 100%) | 5 points | _____ |
| B. 75 – 94% of hydric soil perimeter | 4 points | _____ |
| C. 50 – 74% of hydric soil perimeter | 3 points | _____ |
| D. 25 – 49% of hydric soil perimeter | 2 points | _____ |

NOTE: Consider only hydric soil perimeters within easement

Buffer Width (average) Multiplier			
100 feet or more	-- points _____ x 3	=	_____
50 feet to 99 feet	-- points _____ x 2	=	_____

V. Vegetated Wetlands Expected in 10 Years

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| A. Greater than or equal to 20% forested wetlands
(tree species) | 5 points | _____ |
| B. Greater than or equal to 20% shrub wetlands | 5 points | _____ |
| C. Less than 20% open water | 5 points | _____ |
- NOTE: Include points for each that applies

ECONOMIC CRITERIA

TOTALS

VI. Restoration Cost

(divide restoration cost by total easement area)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-------|
| A. Less than \$500 per acre | 10 points | _____ |
| B. \$500 – 749 per acre | 6 points | _____ |
| C. \$750 – 999 per acre | 4 points | _____ |
| D. \$1000 – 1250 per acre | 2 points | _____ |

NOTE: Projects should not exceed \$2000 per acre

VII. Landowner Contributions (including other non-Federal Sources)

- | | | |
|---|-----------|-------|
| A. Easement Payment Reduction (Bids are Optional) | | |
| 1. USDA Payment Reduced by $\geq 75\%$ | 20 points | _____ |
| 2. USDA Payment Reduced by $\geq 50\%$ | 15 points | _____ |
| 3. USDA Payment Reduced by $\geq 25\%$ | 10 points | _____ |
| B. Restoration | | |
| 1. Greater than or equal to 40% | 10 points | _____ |
| 2. Greater than or equal to 25% | 6 points | _____ |
| 3. Greater than or equal to 10% | 2 points | _____ |

TOTAL SCORE _____

OTHER CRITERIA (check off)

___ Endangered Species ___ Coal Rights (controlled by bidder)

SIGNATURES _____

District Conservationist

FWS (or Representative) if available

INSTRUCTIONS FOR WRP

EASEMENT PROJECT RANKING CRITERIA

November 2006

Applicant: The person or corporation who controls the land.

Tract No.: Only if FSA already has assigned a tract number. Persons enrolled in WRP will be required to comply with Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) and Food Security Act requirements.

Easement: Check one, Permanent or 30 – easement.

I. Location

A. Proximity to Protected Wildlife Lands: On location map, measure from edge of proposed WRP boundary to the boundary of the wildlife protected area.

Maximum score – 20 points

B. Proximity to Riparian Area: Measure from the edge of the proposed WRP easement boundary nearest to the stream to the edge of the natural riparian vegetation, or the edge of the stream if the riparian area is in agricultural use (pasture or cropland).

Multiplier: Certain Riparian Areas are eligible for WRP easements, these riparian areas may be up to 300 feet wide on each side of the stream (measured from the stream edge). In these instances the entire WRP easement will usually be contiguous (score of 5 points above).

Maximum score – 10 points

II. Size of Contiguous Easement: It is assumed there is only one easement area per tract (including buffers and riparian areas). If there are more than one, complete only one form per tract – list the actual acreage for each easement area in the margin and do not assign points for this criteria. The State Office will review and assign points.

Maximum score – 30 points

III. Hydrology

A. Hydric Soil Area to be restored: Evaluate only hydric soil within the proposed easement. Estimate the percentage of the hydric soil acreage that has hydrology or will have hydrology restored.

Maximum score – 10 points

B. Average Slope for Restoration Area: Projects on flatter slopes are more cost effective to restore.

Maximum Score – 10 points

C. Saturated Soils above Water Line Elevation: Projects that are on flatter slopes with fine textured soils will have a larger fringe of saturated soils. Estimate the land area that will be between the waters edge and up to one foot in elevation above the permanent pool. This fringe area is then compared to the proposed pool surface area (percent or ratio).

Maximum Score – 10 points

D. Source of Hydrology: Fluctuating hydrology provides more ecological diversity. Therefore, wetlands dominated by perennial (365 days a year) springs or streams, and/or large contributing watersheds (Multiplier) will be scored lower.

Maximum score – 18 points

IV. Buffer Included in Easement: Assign points only if uplands, existing wetlands, or riparian areas are included in addition to the degraded (or recently restored) hydric soils that make the site eligible for WRP. Consider only the perimeters of hydric soil areas that are within the proposed easement (ignore any portion of a hydric soil area that extends beyond the proposed easement). When there are more than one hydric soil areas within the easement, estimate the overall average perimeter that has a buffer.

Multiplier: Estimate the overall average width of the buffer area. Do not use the multiplier if the average is less than 50 feet.

Maximum score – 15 points

V. Vegetated Wetlands Expected in 10 Years: These are bonus points to be assigned if the landowner is interested in managing for these habitats and NRCS and FWS personnel are confident trees and/or shrubs will become established. Also, sites with a minimum of open water are more likely to develop woody habitat.

Maximum score – 15 points

VI. Restoration Cost: Use the total estimated restoration cost. Divide this cost by the entire proposed easement acreage.

Maximum score – 10 points

VII. Landowner Contributions

A. Easement Payment: LANDOWNERS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO 'BID'. If other Non-

Federal funds are provided from outside sources they may be credited to the landowner contribution. Use the county average farm values obtained from the National Agricultural Statistics Service. Contact Easement Program Manager for questions about specific county values.

NOTE: The Maximum Easement Values for 30-year easements are 25% less than for permanent easements. Landowners choosing 30-year easements are not credited for that first 25% reduction in USDA easement payment.

If the landowner wants a certain dollar amount per acre, divide that amount by the weighted average (weighted by acreage) of the USDA easement payment – this will convert the bid to percent.

Maximum score – 20 points

B. Restoration: If other Non-Federal funds are provided from outside sources they may be credited to the landowner contribution. Landowners with permanent easements are not required to contribute to restoration costs. Landowners choosing 30-year easements are required to contribute 25% of the restoration costs and are not assigned points for the first 25% contribution.

Maximum score – 10 points

OTHER CRITERIA: These will not be considered without documentation.

Endangered Species covers all Species of Special Concern, whether federal or state. Enrollees who do not control Coal Rights underlying the easement area will receive a lower priority.

SIGNATURES: NRCS, and a representative of the FWS if available, must be present on-site to complete this form. The District Conservationist must sign for NRCS.

**WETLANDS RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)
NON-EASEMENT PROJECTS RANKING FORM
November 2006**

Applicant_____

County_____

Tract No._____

ENVIRONMENTAL CRITERIA

TOTALS

I. Location

A. Proximity to Other Wetland Restoration Projects

- | | | |
|--|-----------|-------|
| 1. Project is within 1 mile of an existing wetland projects restored under WRP, CREP/CRP, or Partners for Fish and Wildlife | 20 points | _____ |
| 2. Project is within 2 miles of an existing wetland projects restored under WRP, CREP/CRP, or Partners for Fish and Wildlife | 10 points | _____ |

B. Proximity to Riparian Area

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-------|
| 1. Adjoining | 5 points | _____ |
| 2. Less than or equal to 500 feet | 3 points | _____ |

Riparian Area Multiplier – Use only if the WRP Agreement includes the riparian area.

--points _____ x 2 = _____

II. Size of Area Included in Agreement (Contiguous)

(round to whole acre)

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| A. Greater than or equal to 20 acres | 10 points | _____ |
| B. Between 15 and 19 acres | 6 points | _____ |
| C. Between 10 and 14 acres | 4 points | _____ |

Add 1 point for every acre over 20 acres.

- maximum is 20 additional points ____ points _____

III. Hydrology

A. Hydric Soil Area to be Restored (% of hydric soil acreage that will not have hydrology restored)

- | | | |
|--------------|-----------|-------|
| 1. 80 – 100% | 10 points | _____ |
| 2. 60 – 79% | 6 points | _____ |
| 3. 40 – 59% | 2 points | _____ |

NOTES: Consider only hydric soil within agreement area
Include any recent wetland restoration,
but no existing natural wetlands.

B. Average Slope for the Restoration Area

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| 1. Less than or equal to 1.5% | 10 points | _____ |
| 2. Between 1.6 and 2.5% | 6 points | _____ |
| 3. Between 2.6 and 3.0% | 2 points | _____ |

NOTE: Projects should not exceed 4%

C. Saturated Soils Above Water Line Elevation

(Surface Area <1 ft. elev. above planned permanent water line, as % of Permanent Pool Area)

- | | | |
|---|-----------|-------|
| 1. Greater than or equal to 200% (2:1) | 10 points | _____ |
| 2. Greater than or equal to 100% (1:1) | 6 points | _____ |
| 3. Greater than or equal to 50% (0.5:1) | 2 points | _____ |

D. Source of Hydrology – Perennial Flow

- | | | |
|--|----------|-------|
| 1. Less than 25% of water from perennial flow | 6 points | _____ |
| 2. Greater than 25% and less than or equal to 50% of water from perennial flow | 4 points | _____ |
| 3. Greater than 50% of water from perennial flow | 2 points | _____ |

Surface Water Multiplier

Less than 10:1 Watershed Area to Pool Area

-- Points _____ x 3 = _____

Greater than or equal to 10:1 Watershed Area to Pool Area

-- Points _____ x 1 = _____

Greater than or equal to 20:1 Watershed Area to Pool Area

-- Points _____ x 0.5 = _____

IV. Buffer Included in Agreement

(upland or existing natural wetland)

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| A. Surrounds hydric soil area (95 – 100%) | 5 points | _____ |
| B. 75 – 94% of hydric soil perimeter | 4 points | _____ |
| C. 50 – 74% of hydric soil perimeter | 3 points | _____ |
| D. 25 – 49% of hydric soil perimeter | 2 points | _____ |

NOTE: Consider only hydric soil perimeters within agreement

Buffer Width (average) Multiplier			
100 feet or more	-- points _____ x 3	=	_____
50 feet to 99 feet	-- points _____ x 2	=	_____

V. Vegetated Wetlands Expected in 10 Years

- | | | |
|---|----------|-------|
| A. Greater than or equal to 20% forested wetlands
(tree species) | 5 points | _____ |
| B. Greater than or equal to 20% shrub wetlands | 5 points | _____ |
| C. Less than 20% open water | 5 points | _____ |
- NOTE: Include points for each that applies

ECONOMIC CRITERIA

TOTALS

VI. Restoration Cost

(divide restoration cost by total agreement area)

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------|-------|
| A. Less than \$500 per acre | 10 points | _____ |
| B. \$500 – 749 per acre | 6 points | _____ |
| C. \$750 – 999 per acre | 4 points | _____ |
| D. \$1000 – 1250 per acre | 2 points | _____ |

NOTE: Projects should not exceed \$2000 per acre

VII. Landowner Contributions (including other non-Federal Sources)

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|-------|
| A. Greater than or equal to 50% | 10 points | _____ |
| B. Greater than or equal to 40% | 6 points | _____ |
| C. Greater than or equal to 35% | 2 points | _____ |

TOTAL SCORE _____

OTHER CRITERIA (check off)

___ Endangered Species

SIGNATURES _____

District Conservationist

FWS (or Representative) if available

INSTRUCTONS FOR WRP

NON-EASEMENT PROJECT RANKING CRITERIA

November 2006

Applicant: The person or corporation who controls the land.

Tract No.: Only if FSA already has assigned a tract number. Persons enrolled in WRP will be required to comply with Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) and Food Security Act requirements.

I. Location

A. Proximity to Other Wetland Restoration Projects: On location map, measure from edge of proposed WRP agreement boundary to the boundary of the nearest voluntary wetland restoration project area.

Maximum score – 20 points

B. Proximity to Riparian Area: Measure from the edge of the proposed WRP agreement boundary nearest to the stream to the edge of the natural riparian vegetation, or the edge of the stream if the riparian area is in agricultural use (pasture or cropland).

Multiplier: Certain Riparian Areas are eligible for WRP agreements, these riparian areas may be up to 300 feet wide on each side of the stream (measured from the stream edge). In these instances the entire WRP agreement will usually be contiguous (score of 5 points above).

Maximum score – 10 points

II. Size of Contiguous Agreement: It is assumed there is only one agreement area per tract (including buffers and riparian areas). If there are more than one, complete only one form per tract – list the actual acreage for each agreement area in the margin and do not assign points for this criteria. The State Office will review and assign points.

Maximum score – 30 points

III. Hydrology

A. Hydric Soil Area to be restored: Evaluate only hydric soil within the proposed agreement. Estimate the percentage of the hydric soil acreage that has hydrology or will have hydrology restored.

Maximum score – 10 points

B. Average Slope for Restoration Area: Projects on flatter slopes are more cost effective to restore.

Maximum Score – 10 points

C. Saturated Soils above Water Line Elevation: Projects that are on flatter slopes with fine textured soils will have a larger fringe of saturated soils. Estimate the land area that will be between the waters edge and up to one foot in elevation above the permanent pool. This fringe area is then compared to the proposed pool surface area (percent or ratio).

Maximum Score – 10 points

D. Source of Hydrology: Fluctuating hydrology provides more ecological diversity. Therefore, wetlands dominated by perennial (365 days a year) springs or streams, and/or large contributing watersheds (Multiplier) will be scored lower.

Maximum score – 18 points

IV. Buffer Included in Agreement: Assign points only if uplands, existing wetlands, or riparian areas are included in addition to the degraded (or recently restored) hydric soils that make the site eligible for WRP. Consider only the perimeters of hydric soil areas that are within the proposed agreement (ignore any portion of a hydric soil area that extends beyond the proposed agreement). When there are more than one hydric soil areas within the agreement, estimate the overall average perimeter that has a buffer.

Multiplier: Estimate the overall average width of the buffer area. Do not use the multiplier if the average is less than 50 feet.

Maximum score – 15 points

V. Vegetated Wetlands Expected in 10 Years: These are bonus points to be assigned if the landowner is interested in managing for these habitats and NRCS and FWS personnel are confident trees and/or shrubs will become established. Also, sites with a minimum of open water are more likely to develop woody habitat.

Maximum score – 15 points

VI. Restoration Cost: Use the total estimated restoration cost. Divide this cost by the entire proposed agreement acreage.

Maximum score – 10 points

VII. Landowner Contributions

If other Non-Federal funds are provided from outside sources they may be credited to the landowner contribution. Landowners with permanent agreements are not required to contribute to restoration costs. Landowners choosing 30-year agreements are required to contribute 25% of

the restoration costs and are not assigned points for the first 25% contribution.

Maximum score – 10 points

OTHER CRITERIA: These will not be considered without documentation.

Endangered Species covers all Species of Special Concern, whether federal or state. Enrollees who do not control Coal Rights underlying the agreement area will receive a lower priority.

SIGNATURES: NRCS, and a representative of the FWS if available, must be present on-site to complete this form. The District Conservationist must sign for NRCS.